

## **AFSAC Meeting Minutes**

### **January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

#### **In Attendance**

"Safety Herb" Everett – Food Safety & Training Consultant

Don Harman – Harman's Repair Station, Inc.

Dr. Brian Himelbloom – Kodiak Seafood & Marine Science Center

Steve Lacy –Director of Food Safety, Fred Meyer

Lorinda Lhotka – DEC/FS&S

Randy Pfeuffer – DEC/FS&S

Ginger Provo – DHSS/DPH/Section of Epidemiology

Kimberly Stryker – DEC/FS&S

Sue Webb – DHSS/DPH/Juneau Public Health Nursing/Emergency Preparedness

Bryce Wrigley – AK Farm Bureau, Alaska Flour Company, Wrigley Farms

Barney Baty

#### **FS&S Program Status/Updates – Kimberly Stryker**

- **Personnel Changes**

- 1) Three Environmental Health Officer Positions are currently open. Two EHO III positions are open at the Soldotna and Kodiak field offices and an EHO I-II position is open in the Fairbanks field office.
- 2) Anchorage EHO Jeri Fogue accepted a position with the Drinking Water Program in Soldotna. Recruitment for her position with FS&S is pending.
- 3) Fairbanks EHO Sandy Hunstein retired at the end of December.
- 4) Anchorage EHO Mike Solter has taken over Sandy Hunstein's duty as Recall Coordinator.

- **Training & Standardization**

- 1) A process of standardization has been initiated by FS&S designed to ensure that EHOs utilize similar methods of assessing situations when conducting inspections. A joint DEC/Municipality of Anchorage standardization class is tentatively scheduled for February.
- 2) Five EHOs attended a "HACCP for Regulators" course in San Diego last month and Mike Solter is currently attending an "EPI in Action" course in Atlanta offered by Emory University.
- 3) FSS is conducting inspection desk audits to provide EHOs with feedback and guidance in writing inspection reports and to promote uniformity statewide.

- **Program Update**

The most recent legislative session approved an approx \$125,000 increment for the purpose of expanding inspection efforts in rural areas and schools. We are using that increment to focus on these areas and facilities.

- **Risk Factor Survey**

Lorinda Lhotka presented an in-depth overview of the purpose and implementation of Risk Factor and Baseline Studies. Improper Holding and Cooling is an issue that needs attention. Brian and Steve volunteered to be part of a workgroup to study the data and make recommendations as to appropriate interventions and outreach the program should implement.

- **Recalls & Foodborne Illness Investigations/EPI Report – Ginger Provo**

- 1) Links to all recalls may be found at: <http://www.epi.alaska.gov>
- 2) EPI has scheduled a meeting on March 18<sup>th</sup> with Dr. Bill Keene of the State of Oregon's Section of Epidemiology, to discuss Alaska's foodborne illness response program.
- 3) A foodborne illness presentation is scheduled for May 1<sup>st</sup> in Fairbanks, to be conducted by Lorinda Lhotka and Ginger Provo.
- 4) EPI and FSS jointly issued a correction to an Alaska Magazine article that stated that the consumption of recreationally-harvested shellfish in South East Alaska is safe during certain times of the year. The correction clarified that there is no particular time of the year in which recreationally harvested shellfish is not linked to paralytic shellfish poisoning.

- **Outreach – Randy Pfeuffer**

- 1) Randy Pfeuffer will be attending the Alaska Public Health Summit at the Hotel Captain Cook in Anchorage, from January 14 – 16 and assembling the Germ City display.
- 2) Retail Food Permit mail-outs this year include posters geared towards food workers illustrating the prevention of foodborne illness and the importance of employee health when handling food.
- 3) Improvements to the FS&S website emphasizing risk factors were discussed. A major risk factor such as temperature abuse (cold/hot holding) is an especially important area of concentration. While many methods of conveying outreach information were suggested (share personal stories with food workers, show videos, help with root cause

- analyses, provide thermometers, target children in schools, campaign during food safety month) by those in attendance, Steve Lacy made the point that too much information can be overwhelming for industry. Steve described an employee training program used by Fred Meyer entitled F.A.S.T. (Food at Safe Temperatures) and offered to forward an employee safety video to AFSAC for review.
- 4) Anyone interested in discussing other outreach strategies may contact Lorinda Lhotka.

### **Certified Food Protection Manager Courses in Remote Areas – Randy Pfeuffer**

- In an effort to provide Certified Food Protection Manager training and testing to remote areas of Alaska, Kate Idzorek of UAF Cooperative Extension has been instrumental in developing a statewide network of test proctors and videoconference courses. The first recently held videoconference course was very successful and a second is scheduled for January 10<sup>th</sup>. This UAF sponsored program is not designed to replace other organizations that provide similar services, such as CHARR, but to ensure availability for areas of the state otherwise not served.

### **Role of AFSAC – Randy Pfeuffer**

- FSS is interested in ideas to build momentum needed to follow through on projects and excite folks about AFSAC. A reevaluation of how meetings are conducted is also a step forward in focusing the committee's efforts. Several suggestions were made in this regard:
  - 1) Invite special speakers to meetings to discuss specific issues or hold educational workshops. (traceback, safe food handling practices, mass feeding centers during emergencies)
  - 2) Regular Epi updates.
  - 3) Develop a work group designed to specifically discuss laws and regulations.
  - 4) Distribute a survey to committee members that will provide their feedback on what their expectations are and how their membership is worth their time.
  - 5) Shorten meeting times (1 hour), but hold meetings monthly.
  - 6) Gather more participant input for agenda topics.
  - 7) Gather member feedback to ensure the time of the meeting works for maximum participation.

8) Provide target dates for specific workgroup projects.

### **Updates/Attendee Report**

- “Safety Herb” Everett will be attending the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Governor’s Safety and Health Conference from March 18-20 at the Egan Convention Center in Anchorage. Herb mentioned that AFSAC or FSS could provide SWAG for the goodie bags to promote food safety.
- Bryce Wrigley has been spearheading an effort to encourage the use of barley flour as an alternative to wheat flour.
- Dr. Brian Himelbloom suggested that FS&S erect a booth at the 2013 conference of the Alaska Society for Technology in Education.

### **Action Items**

1. FSS will update its website to provide information based on risk factors.
2. FSS will develop a brief survey for members to gather ideas to make AFSAC meetings more useful and productive.
3. The Risk Factor Survey workgroup will meet and review the data.
4. Members interested in joining the Risk Factor Survey workgroup will contact Lorinda Lhotka.
5. Steve Lacy will forward F.A.S.T. to FSS for distribution to interested AFSAC members if his company policies allow.
6. Members will forward agenda topics to Randy Pfeuffer by March 15 for the next meeting.

**The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 16<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 pm at the DEC building, 555 Cordova Street in Anchorage and via teleconference.**